

## Sketches of the history of Hutchinson /

### **SKETCHES OF THE HISTORY OF HUTCHINSON.\* BY HON. WILLIAM W. PENDERGAST.**

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#### **FOUNDING OF THE TOWN BY THE HUTCHINSON SINGERS.**

The gradual decadence of the gold excitement which drew so many thousands to California during the half dozen years succeeding the discovery of gold there in 1848, turned the tide of migration toward the west borders of the Mississippi. Long trains of west-bound travelers headed for Chicago every morning and evening from New York, Philadelphia, and Boston. Chicago was the great distributing point. There all stopped to catch their breath and take their bearings, and the thirty-year-old city at the head of lake Michigan seized the business which Chagres had snatched during the California boom. She took advantage of her opportunity, and also, I fear, of her innocent tenderfoot victims. The immense tidal wave was there divided. One branch flowed southwest into "bleeding Kansas," following up Massachusetts' "thirty thousand moral rifles," the war cry being "Freedom for Kansas." The other stream swept northwest to the region of the "sky-tinted waters."

In the spring of 1855, I was caught up in Massachusetts and swirled along in this mighty movement of restless humanity, but not to the land of gold. Chicago, "the Garden City," was to be my Ultima Thule, my firm abiding place, but

"The best laid schemes o' mice and men Gang aft a-gley."

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Two months later I was plodding my weary pilgrim way through southern Minnesota, “spying out the land” and weighing its future. It seemed to be a beautiful land, just as it came from the hand of nature, and any farmer should have been satisfied with a hundred and sixty acres of it. But I was told that a hundred miles or more to the northwest, on the borders of the “Big Woods,” the soil was still better and the outlook even more alluring. That promising, if not “promised,” land I then and there resolved to see before many moons had waxed and waned. The trip I was then taking could not be prolonged, on account of work awaiting me in Milwaukee and Chicago.

In October I started out on my second Minnesota trip, upon which two weeks were spent in explorations to the north, east, and south of the Falls of St. Anthony. By that time it was getting too late for the survey of the Big Woods country, if the job was to be a thorough one.

Fired with zeal for the new land, I went back as far as Milwaukee, and in a few days had the pleasure of hearing my old friends, the Hutchinson family, from Milford, N. H.,—Judson, John, and Asa,—sing to a full house,

“We’ve come from the mountains of the old Granite State,” and other inspiring songs, rendered as only they knew how. After the concert, at my invitation they all promised to call on me the next day, which they accordingly did. In our pleasant talk they unfolded to me their plans for the future. They had started out to sing their way through to Kansas, there to found a village, call it Hutchinson, make homes for themselves, build up the town, join the “Jayhawkers” and squelch the “Border Ruffians.” Said I, “Why not skip all that blood and poetry, go to Minnesota, the most favored country on the earth, and found a city that you will always be proud of?” “Have you been there?” they asked. “Yes.” Then question followed question, like shots from a Gatling gun. The answers were satisfactory, and led to the settlement of the town of Hutchinson in McLeod county, Minnesota.

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Hither many later immigrants have been attracted, and they are now faithfully working shoulder to shoulder with the old timers, who have borne the burden and the heat of the day, to make this what it certainly bids fair to become, the most charming and 71 delightful, the most cozy and truly homelike place in the Northwest.

The result of the conference was an immediate change of plans on the part of the Hutchinsons, who had in so short a time become convinced that their horoscope had not been rightly interpreted. It was agreed that my cousin, Roswell H. Pendergast, should go along with them, and that I should stay through the winter, dispose of my photographing business, and follow on the first boat that should go through from Galena to St. Paul in the spring of 1856. The objective point was some place in the charming region west of the Big Woods, to which allusion has already been made. The exact spot was to be fixed upon by the Hutchinsons, their advance agent, E. E. Johnson, and R. H. Pendergast, who went with them.

Having arrived at the little village on the west side of the Mississippi adjoining the Falls of St. Anthony, they were lucky enough to fall in with an educated and enterprising young civil engineer, by the name of Lewis Harrington, who readily entered into the spirit of their plans, and who without hesitation accepted an earnest invitation to become a member of the company. Before they left this little settlement, Col. John H. Stevens, its father, B. E. Messer, an accomplished musician and former singing master, John H. Chubb, a young bachelor from Whitehall, N. Y., Henry Chambers, an unnaturalized Canadian, Lucius N. Parker, and John Calef, were duly initiated into the fraternity.

November 16, 1855, the company, with two two-horse teams and a week's supplies, sallied forth like Don Quixote, "in quest of adventures." The general plan formulated at Milwaukee had been talked over and deliberated upon till it was made more specific by fixing upon a favorable location on the Hassan river (now called the South branch of the Crow river) northwest of Glencoe as the most desirable place for the new settlement.

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There was a good road as far as to Shakopee, which was at that time larger than Minneapolis. There the first night was spent.

November 17. Without waiting for breakfast, so anxious were they all to get a glimpse of the town of which they were to be the fathers, they started out betimes in the morning, and, crossing the ferry five miles farther up the Minnesota, reached 72 Carver in season for breakfast. From Carver the road, if the straggling path made through the woods by the Glencoe settlers earlier in the season could be dignified by such a name, suddenly became much worse. Numerous stumps, deep ruts, and deeper chuck-holes, mud and fallen trees, opposed their passage.

Nightfall found them weary and way-worn, with the aspect of "the knight of the sorrowful countenance," their horses jaded, and with a bag of game consisting of a brace of ducks, three partridges, a solitary rabbit, and a squirrel, on the banks of a small stream two or three miles east of the present site of Young America, and eleven miles from Carver. By this stream they prepared to camp for the night. The game was soon skinned, dressed, roasted, and disposed of in the most hearty if not the most approved style; and no dinner at the West Hotel, nor even at Delmonico's, was ever better enjoyed.

November 18. At daylight the camp was astir. After a "picked up" breakfast, the tent was struck and the pilgrims were moving toward their Mecca. A couple of partridges roasted before an improvised fire, with a pound or two of hardtack, served for dinner. Buffalo creek was crossed before sunset, Chambers going ahead and breaking the ice with his feet. As the water was three feet deep and Glencoe five miles away he unwillingly admitted that he got but little fun out of this operation.

Over a smoother way better time was now made, and twilight found our explorers on the outmost verge of civilization. They would have had to push their way 2,000 miles farther unless they changed their course, before reaching another town or meeting a white man.

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Doty's Hotel, a one-story log building "with all the modern improvements." offered them a welcome, a shelter and first-class accommodations at first-class rates, and there they ensconced themselves for the night.

November 19. With A. J. Bell, a Glencoe surveyor, for a guide, the line of march was resumed. As the road they had been following ended at Glancoe, the scattered groves were the only landmarks. They struck the Hassan river at the bend near the spot where Philip Busson, the Frenchman, now lives. Here was a delightful grove, resplendent with the gorgeous hues of a Minnesota Indian summer. The air was crisp and invigorating. The scene was charming, and the party would willingly have tabernacled 73 there. The sky, the earth, the air, the overarching trees, the shimmering stream, the fertile soil, were so many Circes wooing them to stay.

Thanks, however, to Mr. Bell, who assured them that there was a better place six miles farther up the river, the company, after a few deep-drawn sighs, reluctantly moved on, some on foot, and some riding in the wagons, these being the first to reach the "promised land." While they were pitching their tents, at the edge of the grove west of the place now occupied by the Catholic parsonage, Parker went back with one of the teams to meet the rest of the party. When the last straggler was picked up and brought in and all were seated in Turkish fashion round the crackling camp-fire, they with one voice declared that spot the most beautiful and attractive they had ever seen. The charming woods, the winding sweep of the crystal river, the range of circling bluffs beyond, the smooth lawnlike slope from forest to stream, the autumnal robings of shrubs and trees and creeping vines, the bewildering beauty of the whole view, all combined to awaken their enthusiasm, stir their blood, and set every nerve to tingling with delight, while Hope was busy with her brush and easel painting bright visions of the future.

Messer, the poet, the artist, the optimist, the dreamer par excellence of the company, which was divided about equally between poets, artists, optimists, and dreamers, on the one side, and plain practical men on the other, seized his fiddle, which was never far from

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his person, and struck up “The Star Spangled Banner.” The Hutchinsons, and all who could sing, “joined in.” For the first time since “the morning stars sang together,” grand strains of heavenly harmony echoed through the listening groves, and finally died away on the range of circling bluffs beyond the distant river.

### **ADOPTION OF A CONSTITUTION.**

November 20, a business meeting was held in the tent. Col. J. H. Stevens was chosen president; B. E. Messer, secretary; and A. J. Bell, Lewis Harrington, Asa B. Hutchinson, B. E. Messer, and J. H. Stevens, a committee to draft a constitution and bylaws. They then adjourned to meet at Glencoe the next morning. November 21, the company met according to adjournment, and 74 adopted articles of agreement, which were substantially as follows:

1. There shall be two town sites, each containing 320 acres: Harmony, to be located on the south half of section 31, township 117, range 29; and Hutchinson, on the north half of section 6, township 116, range 29.
2. The two sites shall be divided into 100 shares.
3. The Hutchinsons shall each have ten shares. Each of the eleven men with them shall have five shares. The remaining fifteen shares shall be disposed of by the Hutchinsons as they think best.
4. The river shall continue to be called by its Indian name Hassan (Leaf).
5. L. Harrington, R. H. Pendergast, and Henry Chambers, were appointed to do the business of the company, and dispose of lots to actual settlers.
6. Special meetings shall be held at any time on the written request of three shareholders.
7. Any shareholder neglecting to pay authorized assessments shall forfeit his stock.

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8. It was voted to employ L. Harrington to survey the two sites, his compensation being \$380.
9. Five acres were set apart for "Humanity's Church."
10. Fifteen acres were set aside for a park (afterward increased to twenty-two acres).
11. Eight lots were reserved for educational purposes.
12. It was solemnly decreed that "in the future of Hutchinson, woman shall enjoy equal rights with man."
13. "No lot shall ever be occupied by any building used as a saloon, bowling alley, or billiard room, on penalty of forfeiture of the lot."

The next morning the company set out on their return to Minneapolis.

During the winter Messrs. Harrington and Bell surveyed the town site, Harrington really doing all the business connected with the survey, though he and Bell took the contract together.

### **PIONEER REMINISCENCES.**

Agreeably to my promise made the fall before, I left Milwaukee 75 on the 11th of April, 1856, for Hutchinson. My father and brother (T. H.), a cousin (Solomon Pendergast) now at Sauk Center, T. B. Chesley, and six others, had come out from New Hampshire to go with me. We reached Read's Landing, at the foot of lake Pepin, on the 14th. There we waited two days for the ice to break up, when, tired of "hope deferred," we walked round the lake thirty miles over a muddy road to Wacouta, where we found the Time and Tide, one of Louis Robert's boats, with steam up ready to take us to St. Paul. This steaming

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up we found was only a trick to make us buy tickets at once. It was played several times before the boat finally started.

We landed at St. Paul on the 17th, and took passage on the Reveille for Carver. On the morning of the 18th we all left on foot for Young America, where we staid that night, sleeping four in a bed wedged in like smelts. The next day hard walking began to tell on the older members of the party; and the three young Pendergasts, Chesley, Atherton, and Glass, soon left the others out of sight. At Glencoe they got a lunch and pushed on, following directions received from some men who thought they knew the way. At nightfall we camped by a lake six miles out and a mile or so east of the present Hutchinson and Glencoe road. We had no blankets, no tent, and no food, except a few pieces of hardtack bought at Carver the day before.

Solomon, however, shot a goose near the shore of the lake, but, as bad luck would have it, she flew out to the middle of the lake before failing. Here was a "pretty kettle of fish." I prepared half a dozen little sticks and tried to get the others to draw, in order to decide which one of us should swim out and get her. It was forty rods to where she lay. The ground was beginning to freeze around the edge of the lake, and little needles of ice were shooting out from the shore over the still water. There was nothing alluring to be seen, except the goose floating on the bosom of the lake at what seemed a long distance away. It was not a tempting bait under the circumstances. No one would draw a stick. Disgusted with what seemed to me their cowardice, I went around to the opposite side of the lake, as the goose looked nearer that shore, and plunged into the ice-cold water. On reaching the goose and looking around to take my bearings, the camp looked as near as the shore I had left; so, taking the goose's neck in my mouth, I paddled towards the fire, which had been kindled 76 under a big oak and looked very comfortable, but which at the time did me very little good. The water was lighted up more than it was warmed by the blaze. Nearly benumbed, I landed with the trophy, only to find that my thick woolen stockings had been burned in my absence by one of the boys who through kindness had undertaken to dry them before the fire. In three hours the goose was dressed and roasted. A half hour



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later every bone was picked as clean as a mounted skeleton. This done, we lay down on the bare ground, with some sticks and brush above and the stars twinkling through the impromptu lattice work. There and thus we slept the sleep of "Innocents Abroad."

At noon of the 20th we surprised Roswell and four companions named Gray, Whitney, Failing, and Hook (from whom lake Hook got its name), who were holding possession of the J. E. Chesley hut, which stood a few rods from the southeast corner of the town site. Mr. Chesley, finding provisions running low, had gone to St. Paul to replenish his stock. That evening the rest of our company arrived, and, taking us all together, it must be admitted that as "famine breeders" we were a decided success. The visible supply of food, which consisted of about twenty pounds of flour, totally disappeared in two days. A bushel of potatoes, which had been procured for seed, lasted but little longer. A two-bushel sack of horse feed that stood in one corner of the room was not quite so quickly disposed of. It was ground coarse, the hulls were rough and plowed furrows broad and deep from one end of the oesophagus to the other. We made mush of this, and sweetened it with Hassan river water. After each meal we devoutly thanked the Lord for ground feed, and felt grateful that it "was as well with us as it was."

After a few days Mr. Chesley came back with scant supplies for so many, and then he and I started back to St. Paul immediately on foot, bought four yoke of oxen, a wagon, and a load of goods, including a big breaking plow. After two weeks of hard struggling over stumps, through mire-holes and mud lakes, we crossed the Hassan once more, plowed the first field, and harvested the first crop ever raised in the entire Hassan valley. The grasshoppers, however, which came in countless swarms about the first of July, left little harvesting for us to do.

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**THE FOURTH OF JULY, 1856.**

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On July 4th, no other celebration having been planned, a bear hunt was improvised for the occasion, which resulted in killing a huge old bruin, weighing 400 pounds. From the departure of the hunters to the return with the laurels of victory, the watches measured little more than an hour, for the game was in a grove only half a mile away. This was the first Independence Day celebration west of the Big Woods.

### **COST OF LIVING IN THE WINTER OF 1857–58.**

Here is the record for the three months of my second winter in Hutchinson, taken from the expense book of seven who kept “old bachelors' hall” together in the village. It was the most high-toned place there during that winter.

Flour, 5 ½ barrels \$66.00

Beef, 257 pounds 25.70

Potatoes, 7 bushels 7.00

Corn meal, 240 lbs 9.60

Syrup, 8 gallons 8.00

Candies, 20 lbs 5.00

Beans, 2 bushels 4.00

Rice, 12 lbs 1.56

Pepper, 6 papers .60

Suet, 6 lbs 1.00

Butter, 3 lbs 1.05

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Buckwheat, 15 lbs .90

Salt, 14 lbs .90

Soap, 3 lbs .45

Cream of tarter, ½ lb .35

Saleratus, 9 lbs 1.35

Total \$133.46

Cost per man a week \$1.46

### **FIRST TOWN MEETING.**

At the first town meeting, May 11, 1858, forty-eight votes were cast. Four townships voted at Hutchinson, the north two casting 26 votes, and the south two 22 votes.

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### **STEAMBOAT NAVIGATION.**

In the spring and early summer of 1858, a steamboat, twenty by sixty feet in size, was built to run on the Hassan, Crow, and Mississippi rivers to Minneapolis. It made the down trip without much trouble, but never returned. The owners got a chance to sell it to ply on the Mississippi between Minneapolis and St. Cloud. The water of the Hassan river was so high that a steamer could have run from Hutchinson to Minneapolis the first five years without much difficulty.

### **SCARCITY OF FOOD.**

Provisions were very scarce in the spring of 1858. Some families had lived through the winter on potatoes and slippery elm bark. But the middle of May found the Hassan alive

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with buffalo fishes, and the marshes were yellow with the flowers of cowslips; so for a while there was plenty and variety. Those who were too lazy to pick greens went fishing. The fish could be boiled, baked, stewed, or fried; but, whichever way was chosen, the flavoring was always the same, pure Hassan river water. It took a connoisseur to decide which style of cooking had been adopted. Most of the people got their living in a way that may well be pronounced "scaly."

### **MAIL CARRIERS.**

The contract for carrying the mail between Minneapolis and Hutchinson once a week was let this spring to Messrs. Sumner and Parshall. Previous to this, the young men had taken turns in carrying it on their shoulders. T. H. Pendergast's turn came round almost every week, as he was the most willing and the best walker.

### **THE SIOUX OUTBREAK.**

On Saturday, the 16th day of August, 1862, nine men, including myself, set out for Fort Snelling to enlist. Their names were G. T. Belden, William Goshell, W. H. Harrington, John Hartwig, J. T. Higgins, Andrew A. Hopper, Charles M. Horton, Charles Stahl, and W. W. Pendergast. The next Monday Capt. 79 George C. Whitcomb arrived in town from Forest City, with the startling news that the Indians were "on the rampage," that Robinson Jones and Howard Baker and their families had been killed at Acton the day before, and that all the settlers west of us were likely to be massacred. Tuesday morning the captain was in St. Paul, laying the facts before Governor Ramsey and Adjutant General Malmros, both of whom went at once to Fort Snelling. The governor inquired of me about the danger of an Indian outbreak, but I could not confirm the report from Acton, and in fact did not believe it. Soon, however, a courier from the upper Minnesota river came in with the news that Capt. John S. Marsh and more than half his company had been killed while crossing the river. There was no longer room for doubt.

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Our Hutchinson boys had not enlisted, so we all determined to go back and defend our own hearthstones. Captain Whitcomb came with us, having succeeded in getting seventy-five Springfield muskets and three boxes of cartridges, amounting to 3,000 rounds of ammunition. We reached Glencoe the second night, having impressed three teams and two men at Shakopee to haul us and the ammunition. It was seventeen miles from Glencoe to Hutchinson. I determined to walk home that night and Mr. Gosnell offered to come with me. The offer was gladly accepted.

Arriving at home at two o'clock in the morning, we found at our house twenty-six refugees who had escaped from the Upper Sioux Agency under the guidance of John Other Day; and we learned that other refugees were at Harrington's, Belden's, Putnam's, and one or two other places, the whole number being about fifty. All of them left that morning, on Friday, August 22nd, for the more eastern settlements.

Captain Whitcomb, with the teams and military supplies, arrived the same day. A company of Home Guards was soon organized, Lewis Harrington being the captain, Oliver Pierce and Andrew Hopper, lieutenants, and W. W. Pendergast, orderly sergeant. A stockade 100 feet square was constructed in twelve days. Theft came the battle on the road from Acton to Hutchinson, where Capt. Richard Strout's company was beset by 300 Sioux who had been lying in ambush for them. Captain Strout managed to get away and come to Hutchinson, with twenty-three men wounded, and leaving three dead on the field.

That night these Indians attempted to surprise us; but they 80 were halted at the bridge by our sentinels. Instantly all was bustle and activity at the garrison. Officers and men were on the alert. In every direction shadowy forms might be seen moving about in the darkness, peering to catch, if possible, a glimpse of the approaching foe. After half an hour's bootless search, no further cause of alarm being discovered, the camp once more relapsed to silence, which was not again disturbed.

### **THE ATTACK AT HUTCHINSON.**

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The fourth of September opened bright and beautiful. No sign of Indians was anywhere visible, yet most of the men determined not to leave the fort. A few Germans, however, thinking the enemy had gone off in some other direction, concluded to go out to their farms and try to save some of their wheat, which during these troublesome times had been sadly neglected. Six or seven of them started about seven o'clock for their homes in Acoma, and had just reached the point where the road turns to the right to ascend the bluff near Peter Geoghegan's field. Old Mr. Heller was walking a few rods in advance of the team, when a volley was fired from the brow of the hill and Heller was severely wounded in the hip. The horses were quickly wheeled about, the wounded man was helped into the wagon, and the half mile that lay between them and the fort was made in less time than ever before or since.

When the Germans were leaving for their farms. Howard McEwen volunteered to go to the house of W. W. Pendergast, on the bluff at the edge of the woods, east of Albert Langbecker's residence, to get some delicacies for the wounded soldiers of Strout's company. He had found the articles and started back, but in passing through one of the rooms he noticed a book on the mantel-piece, and stopped to look it through. While thus engaged, he was startled by the firing at Mr. Heller, and, in looking out of the window, saw the hill to the west covered with Indians. Though he knew that his safety depended on reaching the bridge in advance of the Indians, who were following the Germans up as fast as they could, still he did not forget his errand. Gathering up his jellies and preserves, he hastened down the hill and got into the town safely.

Soon the Indians were seen circling around the town in all 81 directions, except to the south. From the point where they were first seen to Chesley's, at the southeast corner of the town, there was a continuous line of them, while through the woods at the west their dark forms were occasionally seen gliding from one tree or thicket to another.

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At the commencement of the attack, about eight o'clock, William H. Ensign mounted "old Selim," and, with hat in hand and hair streaming in the wind, dashed away toward Glencoe for reinforcements.

Levi Chesley and a boy by the name of William Wright (son of E. G. Wright, who married Eliza Chesley) were at the farm taking care of the stock, having left us an hour before for that purpose. Warned of approaching danger by the sound of the guns, they looked out of the barn and saw retreat to the town was already cut off, and that the Indians were close upon them. To bridle the best two horses and jump upon their backs was the work of a moment. In another moment they were scouring across the prairie at breakneck speed with half a dozen Indians at their heels. Soon all but two who had the swiftest ponies were distanced. These two followed nearly half way to Glencoe, when, finding themselves gradually losing ground, they suddenly faced about and returned to Hutchinson to join their companions.

Seeing the preparations that had been made for their reception in the center of the town, the Indians amused themselves for a while by setting fire to the buildings on the outskirts. The torch was first applied to the house of Dr. Benjamin, as that stood farthest out of town to the northwest. The next one fired was that of W. W. Pendergast. Next was the academy, and while the flames were slowly creeping up the southwest corner of this building its bell was vigorously rung as an alarm. Then followed other houses on the bluff. Kittredge's, Welton's. Pierce's and Chesley's. On the south side Solomon Pendergast's, J. H. Chubb's, and several smaller ones, shared the same fate.

During this time the twenty-three wounded men of Captain Strout's company were carried from the hotel to a place of greater safety, but less comfort, inside the fort.

It was interesting to note the altered behavior of the Indians when they came in sight of the stockade. As soon as the first volley was fired upon the German farmers, they set up a fearful war cry, and came up over the bluff whooping and yelling as only wild

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Indians can; but when their eyes caught sight of the fort, the trench around it, and armed men prepared to defend it, they stood for a moment dumbfounded. But relying upon their superior numbers, and remembering how the whites had so far everywhere fled before them, they commenced to put their preconcerted plan into execution.

This was to make a vigorous attack from the north, at which all the inhabitants were expected to retreat toward St. Paul, just as they did at Yellow Medicine. To make their victory more complete, about a third of their number were placed in ambush along the border of the grove that skirts the road to Glencoe all the way from the town to the Hutchinson hill. It was thought that while the victorious Indians were pressing the fugitives from behind and driving them like a flock of frightened sheep, those in ambuscade would pour in a deadly fire upon them, soon make clean work of it, and carry off, with little trouble or danger to themselves an abundant harvest of scalps.

But the people here, as the Indians soon found, had no notion of retreating, and were determined to give them ball for ball. The Hutchinson Guards, without consulting Captain Strout, took the places previously assigned to them, Captain Harrington and his fifteen men on the west of the fort, Lieutenant Hopper and his men on the east, Pierce at the south, and Pendergast at the north. We were thus advancing upon the Indians in four different directions for the purpose of protecting the buildings and saving the cattle and horses, which were being stolen by dozens before our eyes, when Captain Strout, seeing what was going on and fearing for the safety of the fort, assumed command of the Hutchinson company and the entire fort, and issued a peremptory order that all should return within the stockade, which most of the men obeyed.

A few refused to recognize Strout's authority, notably Captain Harrington, Lieutenants Pierce and Hopper, Orderly Pendergast, Andrew Hopper, H. McEwen, W. Putnam, G. T. Belden, D. Sivright, William Cook, S. Dearborn, D. Cross, Amos James, H. Harrington, and perhaps one or two others; and these fought through the day each on his own hook, as indeed all did after a short time.



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Lieutenant Hopper got near enough to an Indian near the 83 sawmill to make him "bite the dust;" and Cross was equally fortunate east of the fort. He and one lone Indian had a regular duel, firing three shots apiece, until the last shot of Cross killed his antagonist. In each case the other Indians near at hand caught up the body and carried it off the field.

Andrew A. Hopper, H. Harrington, G. T. Belden, and H. McEwen, firing from the chamber of Sumner's Hotel (the Hartman House), repelled the enemy from that direction.

Earlier in the day, S. Dearborn, Andrew Hopper, and W. W. Pendergast, went down nearly to the river, because many of the redskins were on the other bank, dividing their time between stealing horses and firing at the men on the south side. Taking their stations behind some logs that were scattered along the riverside, and behind ginseng frames that Sumner had piled up there, they popped away for half an hour. The effect was not known, as the grass was tall there, and as it was the custom of the Indians to fall whenever a shot was fired in their direction, whether hit or not. At any rate, they retired to a respectful distance, and the three sought other fields of usefulness.

Howard McEwen distinguished himself by going from the fort over to Sumner's barn, when the balls were flying thickest, and bringing back Sivright's double harness. When asked what he did that for, he said that the barn was likely to be burned, that they wanted Sivright's mules to take the women out with after the fight, and that this was the only harness he knew of that could be saved.

About noon when the fort was surrounded by a circle of fire from the smouldering buildings, the Sioux made a desperate effort to advance from the grove on the west to set fire to the buildings that remained between them and the stockade. Sumner then offered a pair of boots to every man who would go to his stores on the west side of Main street, and bring over a back-load of goods. Several of the younger men volunteered, and a dozen loads were safely stored in the fort within as many minutes. No one was hurt, but a bullet

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hit the pack which C. M. Horton was carrying, and was picked out of one of the boots that composed his load.

There were several "close calls" during the day's fight, but no one in or about the fort actually received any injury. The shooting was mostly at long range. Amos James was wounded 84 by a spent ball, splintering the stock of the gun which he held in his hand. Bullets perforated the buildings inside the stockade, as well as those that were occupied and defended; but on the part of the garrison it was a bloodless fight.

Some of the Indians who fought here were afterwards taken prisoners by General Sibley, and they acknowledged a loss of four killed and fifteen wounded at Hutchinson on that 4th of September.

### **RETREAT AND COUNCIL OF THE SIOUX.**

About four o'clock in the afternoon the firing began to grow weaker, and it was soon noticed that the enemy were disappearing from the north, east, and south, and were retreating toward the west. Soon afterward a company of about forty soldiers were seen approaching from the direction of Glencoe. These were reinforcements that Ensign had succeeded in obtaining. He went first to Glencoe, but found so few men left there that none could be spared. He heard, however, that a small company of infantry and cavalry was stationed at lake Addie, twelve miles distant to the west. Proceeding at once to that place, he found the soldiers and prevailed on them to march to the relief of Hutchinson, and they were the men who arrived just after the close of the battle.

It is very probable that the Indians observed them long before they were seen from the garrison, and that they withdrew for that reason. They had already sent back a dozen reams, more or less, loaded with household goods and other valuables plundered from the houses which they burned in the morning.

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Many persons who had come into the fort left their wagons and harnesses at home, and their horses and cattle on the prairie. The Indians gathered all the oxen and horses they could lay their hands to, and hitched them to the wagons which they found, so that there was no lack of teams to transport their plunder. They shot other horses and cattle that came within-range, to the number of about a hundred.

On reaching Otter lake, they stopped and held a council of war. Some were in favor of resting there a few hours, and then, under cover of the night, to come back and take the people by surprise. They argued that our men, thinking they had fled and that our victory was complete, would set no pickets, that the fort might be fired in a dozen places before the alarm would be sounded, and that amid the darkness and confusion they could make short work of massacring the entire garrison.

But wiser councils prevailed. The older men said that, as they failed to surprise us on the night before, so they would fail again; that the preparations we had made to receive them, the painstaking and skill manifested in the fortifications, and the good judgment shown in their location, where they could not come up from any direction without exposing themselves to almost certain death, all went to prove that the Hutchinson men were wary and cautious, and not to be easily caught napping. They thought the best way for them was to leave with the plunder they had obtained, and to try their luck somewhere else at surprises. So the proposed night attack was given up.

This matter of the consultation at Otter lake was learned from the Indian prisoners at Beaver Falls. In point of fact, there would have been no chance for a successful night attack. A double guard was kept up around the fort all night long; and, with the additional forty men and the extra ammunition they brought with them, the fort could have been held, and would have been held, against a thousand such assailants.

### **MURDER OF GERMAN SETTLERS WEST OF HUTCHINSON.**

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Two Germans, by the name of Bilke and Spaude, were at this time living on the farm where old Mr. Sitz now resides, a few miles up the river, in the town of Lynn. They refused to come into the fort, because, they said, they had always treated the Indians well, and the Indians were never forgetful of kindness shown them. They did not anticipate any injuries, and could not be made to see their danger.

But when, on the morning of the fight at Hutchinson, a few Indians came to their house while the families were at breakfast, and in a threatening manner demanded a meal, they began to think they would be safer in the fort. While their guests were causing their bread and meat and potatoes to disappear with marvelous rapidity, they hastened to yoke the oxen and hitch them to the wagon. This done, both families got aboard and started across the river on the way to the town. They had gone but a few rods, however, when the Indians came out of the house and fired, wounding Spaude in the leg. He whipped up his team and set them to running at the top of their speed, the Indians yelling and pursuing. In this way they dashed down the bank into the river, and there Spaude was shot again, and fell into the middle of the stream, where the body was found the next day.

Bilke and the women and children now leaped from the wagon, and took refuge in the tall grass on the north side of the river, at this place six or seven feet high. While the Indians who were following them stopped to scalp Spaude, the others managed to conceal themselves from view and were not discovered. It has always been a matter of wonder that they succeeded in escaping as they did; but doubtless the Indians thought that they had guns with them, and that if any one should happen to stumble upon their hiding place it would be at the expense of his life. They could see the grass quiver where the Indians went along, but so far they were safe. Mrs. Spaude prevented her two-year-old baby from betraying with its cries their place of concealment by pressing her hand upon its mouth.

As soon as they found the coast in a measure clear, the two families separated. Mrs. Spaude recrossed the river with the baby and a five-year-old child, and, crouching and picking their way along in the tallest grass, they made their toilsome way around the south

end of Otter lake, and along the edge of the woods, till they reached the corner of Mr. Hutchinson's field, in sight of the fort, a little after noon, when they were seen and killed by the attacking Indians. When picked up at evening, their faces were entirely shot away, the muzzles of the guns having been held but a few inches away when they were fired.

Mrs. Bilke, with three children, remained longer concealed in the grass, and at last made her way to a vacant log-house near the river on the north side, where they staid over night, and where they were found the next day and brought to the town. Mr. Bilke, clad only in a checked hickory shirt, after meeting innumerable troubles and dangers, finally reached the town just after the Indians left. He had divested himself of one piece of clothing after another, so as to run faster; had been all day surrounded by his enemies; had dodged this way and that, to avoid them; and unscathed had now got where he could take a long breath and feel safe.

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### **SERVICE OF THE HUTCHINSON GUARDS.**

On the 22d of September the Hutchinson Guards, having been already recognized by the State as a regular military organization, were sworn into the service, their time commencing August 23, 1862. They were on duty seventy days, to the first of November.

Lieut. Oliver Pierce, Frank G. Jewett, and David Cross, left Hutchinson on September 23d, to look up a man named Sanborn who had not been seen for several days. They first visited Mr. Webb's house, eight miles distant to the northwest, which they found to have been ransacked. The next stop was at Dr. Kennedy's, where all was topsy-turvy. Surgical instruments, bottles of medicine, pills, plasters, and potions, lay scattered in inextricable confusion. Tincture bottles were found empty. Jars of specimens preserved in alcohol had been drained to the last drop, and all the doctor's collections of rare and interesting entomological, vermiculous, and batrachoid curiosities were in the last stages of decay. The Indians have a deep and abiding faith in fire-water, and look upon the wasting of the

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smallest quantity as a calamity. They doubtless got some doses this time that were long remembered.

From Kennedy's the men were walking along, slowly and carefully examining the ground, when suddenly three guns were fired, almost at the same instant, and Cross fell to the ground, pierced by a bullet through the heart. He died immediately. The others thought to bring the body back with them, but the Indians were upon them and they had to fight their way to the team, which they made good use of. It did not take their foes more than a minute or two to mount and give chase, and never had that region witnessed such a race. The driver, Pierce, urged the horses to the top of their speed; and thirteen Sioux, on their ponies, were crowding them closely, with Cross's scalp hoisted on a pole for a battle flag. Jewett sat in the rear of the wagon, with his legs dangling down, loading and firing as fast as the swaying and jolting permitted; and the leaders of the chase gave back shot for shot. Three or four at last gave up and turned back. One got to the front, and a well-directed shot unhorsed him. This ended the pursuit. The next day another party went out and brought in the bodies of both Cross and Sanborn, the latter having been brained with a grub-hoe and left where he fell.

No other stirring event occurred till the following July, when Little Crow was killed about six miles north of Hutchinson.

### **THE KILLING OF LITTLE CROW.**

On the morning of July 3, 1863, Nathan Lamson and his son Chauncey left Hutchinson for their home in the north part of the town, about five miles away, to look after their stock. All being found as they left it a few weeks before, they started out near evening to hunt for a deer. While they were stealing carefully along a dim path or trail, leading northwestward, the old man's quick eye caught sight of something moving in the bushes a few rods beyond them. Peering through the thicket, he saw two Indians, a middle-aged

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man (afterward ascertained to be Little Crow) and a boy (his son Wowinapa) of about sixteen years, picking raspberries which were abundant and ripe.

Mr. Lamson thought this too good a chance to lose. Creeping to a poplar tree which stood near, he rested his gun against the trunk and fired, wounding Little Crow in the side. He did not fall, but, looking around, saw his assailant, and in an instant sent a bullet through the fleshy part of Mr. Lamson's left shoulder. Chauncey then advanced toward Little Crow, following the rather blind trail around the raspberry patch toward the northwest, while his father dropped to the ground to reload. Little Crow, evidently thinking him killed, seized his son's rifle and moved along the bush-skirted path toward Chauncey. They saw each other and fired at the same moment. Only one report was heard by either Chauncey or his father. Little Crow fell mortally wounded by a bullet through his breast, and Chauncey felt the wind upon his cheek as the other ball passed harmlessly by.

Supposing his father to have been killed, and fearing lest other Indians might be near, Chauncey hurried to give the alarm in Hutchinson, and reached there about ten o'clock that evening. His mother, nearly distracted, begged the men at the fort to go in search of her husband. William Gosnell was the first to vounteer. Birney Lamson, the old man's youngest son, a Frenchman by the name of Le Maitre, and two or three other citizens followed. They, with six mounted men of the Goodhue County Tigers, who were stationed at Hutchinson, set out immediately, and reached 89 Lamson's house a little past midnight, where they rested about three hours. At the beginning of dawn, they resumed their march. They went north one mile to the woods path before mentioned, and turning to the west followed it about half a mile, when they came to the body of Little Crow stretched out at length on the ground about six rods from the spot where young Lamson delivered the fatal shot.

Nathan Lamson's white shirt and his gun were found in a plum grove near by, but the owner was not to be seen. On the return of the party to Hutchinson, however, he was among the first to welcome them. He had thrown away his shirt, thinking that its color

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might attract the notice of the foe, and his gun was left because he was not able, in reloading, to get the ball down more than nine inches from the muzzle, so that he feared it would burst if he attempted to fire it. In his trepidation he had filled the barrel nearly full in loading it direct from the powder flask. He had lain concealed in the thicket until nightfall, and then, leaving his shirt and gun, had made his way to Hutchinson, arriving about two o'clock in the morning.

Wowinapa, escaping and returning to rejoin the Sioux in Dakota, was captured twenty-six days later by a party of our soldiers near Devil's lake. His statement; as published by Heard and by Bryant and Murch in their books on the Sioux outbreak and war, proved that the Indian thus shot near Hutchinson was Little Crow, who had been the chief orator and plotter for the massacre of the frontier settlers less than a year before.